

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAPE T 00206 101916Z  
ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5723

S E C R E T CAPE TOWN 0206

NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1  
TAGS: PGOV PFOR SF RH  
SUBJ: VOSTER-SMITH MEETING

1. SIR DAVID SCOTT AND I WERE RECEIVED BY PM VORSTER AT  
6:30 P.M. WITH FON MIN MULLER AND DFA SECRETARY FOURIE PRESENT.

2. READING FROM A PREPARED DOCUMENT PM ASKED THAT WE CONVEY  
TO OUR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS AND  
PROPOSAL STEMMING FROM HIS TALK WITH SMITH:

A) "WHATEVER MIGHT HAVE BEEN SAID ABOUT IAN SMITH AND  
RODESIAN GOVERNMENT IN PAST, I AM FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT  
SMITH AND THE RODESIAN GOVERNMENT IRREVOCABLY ACCEPT MAJORITY  
RULE IN TWO YEARS. I HAVE NO DOUBT IN MY MIND WHATSOEVER  
ABOUT THIS POINT."  
B) "I AM CONVINCED THAT THEY ARE HONEST AND SINCERE IN  
ESTABLISHING AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT LEADING TO MAJORITY RULE  
AND, THEREFORE, I AM CONVINCED THAT ON THEIR PART THERE IS A  
REAL DESIRE TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO THIS PROCEDURAL ASPECT."  
C) "I AM CONVINCED THAT DESIRE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM IS NOT  
DEAD. A NEW INITIATIVE CAN LEAD TO A SOLUTION IF HANDLED  
PROPERLY."  
D) "ONE THING THAT STANDS IN THE WAY AS FAR AS RHODESIA  
IS CONCERNED IS THE PROBLEM OF WITH WHOM TO NEGOTIATE.  
MY FIRM CONVICTION IS THAT UNLESS WE GET THIS HURDLE RESOLVED,

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WE CANNOT MAKE THE PROGRESS WE ALL HOPE CAN BE MADE."  
E) "I FEEL A WAY CAN BE FOUND TO OVERCOME THIS HURDLE.  
IF OUR GOVERNMENTS ARE INTERESTED AND FIND IT DESIREABLE  
THAT THIS AVENUE BE EXPLORED, THEN HIGH LEVEL DISCUSSIONS  
BETWEEN US, UK AND SAG CAN BE VERY FRUITFUL AND MIGHT JUST  
SWING THE BALANCE."

3. IN RESPONSE TO OUR INQUIRY WHETHER HE HAD FORMULATED ANY IDEAS ON THE MECHANICS OF HIS PROPOSAL HE ANSWERED THAT THESE ARE MATTERS THAT CAN BE WORKED OUT IF THE PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTED. HE HOPED THE TALKS COULD BE HELD AT THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE LEVEL. "I AM NOT WANTING TO MAKE A JOB FOR MYSELF," HE SAID, "BUT I WOULD BE PREPARE PERSONALLY TO DEVOTE A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME TO IT." ON TIMING HE SAID THE SOONER THE BETTER. THE PLACE MADE NO DIFFERENCE.

4. COMMENT: THE PM'S PROPOSAL SHOWS THE SAG'S CONTINUING STRONG INTEREST TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE NATIONALISTS. THIS TIME HE WANTS THE BRITISH DIRECTLY ENGAGED WITH THE TALKS TO FOCUS ON WHAT THE US AND UK CAN DO TO BRING ABOUT A MORE REASONABLE NATIONALIST NEGOTIATING GROUP. THE PM MADE NO REFERENCE TO ADJUSTMENTS THAT HAVE TO BE MADE ON THE RHODESIAN SIDE TO ACHIEVE A BETTER NEGOTIATING CLIMATE, BUT IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION DID NOT RULE THIS OUT AS AN ELEMENT IN THE DISCUSSIONS.

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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